A System Based Approach to Strategize Sustainable Revival of Sanjhi Art and its Textile Correlates

Synopsis

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Conceptual Framework

Traditional crafts are an integral part of the world's cultural heritage, reflecting the history, customs, and creativity of diverse communities. From ancient times to the present day, these crafts have been passed down through generations, preserving traditional techniques, skills, and artistic expressions.

India's cultural heritage is woven into the vibrant tapestry of its traditional textile crafts, each representing a unique story of artistry, history, and cultural diversity. India's traditional textile crafts are a treasure trove of artistic expressions passed down through generations. Every place in India has its various cultures, which has given upward, push to distinct cultural traditions.

The second-largest industry in terms of employment and prospects for a living in rural India is handicrafts, which is behind agriculture. It is the largest decentralized and unorganized sector, giving employment tomore than seven million people**.** The history of India is marked by many centuries where Indian arts crafts and design were highly sought after globally. With over 3,000 precise arts and crafts, the importance of the humanities in Indian society as well as its recognition within the historic international is a testimony to the pleasant workmanship and aesthetics of the Indian craftsmanship.

However, sustenance has its own bottlenecks which if not addressed well leads to challenges towards its maintainability. Many traditional crafts, in recent times, have faced such threats towards their survival and sustenance leading to their possible extinction. The reason for these could be attributed to the fast-changing consumer preferences and taste due to urbanization in the context of present day global market scenario. It would not be out of way to present the rich status of diverse cultural tapestry of different regions of the world.

Crafts like Roghan paintings, Mithila paintings; Toda embroidery &Dhokra craft Parsi, and *Sanjhi* are endangered.

***Sanjhi* - a Ritualistic Craft**

Sanjhi, a kind of paper cutting used in Mathura and Vrindavan in Uttar Pradesh, is being practiced today. *Sanjhi* is concurrently done in two ways—by young, single females in their homes and by priests at temples.

Every evening during the pitra-paksha, or the dark fortnight of the declining moon, in the month of 'Ashwin,' which falls in September or October, *Sanjhi* is made according to temple custom. The

addition to the *Sanjhi*'s made of dry colors. In the temple tradition, there is also a kind of flower ancestors are honored and remembered at 'Pitra-Paksha.' Only a few of the temples in Vrindavan still follow this uncommon ritual. On an elevated earthen platform known as a 'vedi,' an octagonal earthen platform composed of a combination of mud and cow dung, the temple priests and local craftspeople make the '*Sanjhi*.' The eight-petalled lotus is symbolized by the octagonal platform.

In this temple tradition, the many flower and leaf designs that are artistically arranged in the 'rangoli' serve as the motif. The most significant area of the 'rangoli,' known as the 'hauda' (also spelled 'hriday' or 'heart'), where the events in Lord Krishna and Radha's lives are depicted, is produced after the production of these floral patterns. The central subject of '*Sanjhi*' in this temple tradition is represented by the image in the center.

A number of '*Sanjhi'* stencils are used to produce all of these elaborate designs. Each of these '*Sanjhis'* was made just for that day. After the *Sanjhi* has been worshipped, it is removed to create a fresh '*Sanjhi'* for the '*Pitra-Paksha*' the next day. *Sanjhi* patterns made of dry colors are also created on and underwater, in *Sanjhi*.

Significance of Study

Sanjhi is a unique kind of paper-cutting art that uses stencils or hand-cut patterns. It is a traditional art from Mathura, which is renowned as Lord Krishna's residence and is located in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Such folk art may be seen in the Vaishnava temples, which also shows that it was performed by them in the 15^{th} and 16^{th} centuries. Later it became a complicated shape of art by means of the Brahmin priests. The Sanskrit meaning of the word *Sanjhi* is evening or twilight which could refer to the goddess of light and dark.

The significance of developing skilling and entrepreneurial strategies to empower artisans in the revival of dying *Sanjhi* art and its textile production lies in its potential to preserve cultural heritage, stimulate economic growthand ensure the sustainability of the craft for future generations. It is acomprehensive approach that addresses both the artistic and economic dimensions, contributing to the overall well-being and development of artisans and their communities.

By integrating the creative designs of '*Sanjhi*,' the practice of manually cutting patterns onto paper, it is possible to revive the ancient knowledge of textiles while attracting attention to the Indian fabric

segments. The project included utilizing CAD software, including programs like Corel Draw and Adobe Illustrator, to adapt *Sanjhi* art motifs for the design of garments and handicraft items, and then further developing these items using a variety of methods. To contribute valuable insights and recommendations for the development of a sustainable system-based approach for reviving *Sanjhi* Art and its associated textile traditions, ultimately benefiting artisans, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting responsible economic and environmental practices.

The roots of Indian art and crafts go extremely deep, and they have the power to influence future generations. The rich craft traditions of the past are largely responsible for the current state of craft in India. The majority of historical crafts are still in demand today because of their practicality, accessibility to the general public, and success on both local and international markets.

Traditionally, stencils were created from rough paper or banana leaves, but modern artists are now employing handcrafted and recyclable paper to create their masterpieces. *Sanjhi* paper cuts are also available in a variety of shapes on the market. Additionally, the stencils are often used to decorate homes and create practical items like trays, coasters, lampshades, mirrors, wall hangings, and window dividers. Even the 2010 Commonwealth Games held in Delhi had pictograms made of *Sanjhi* art.

Textile sector plays major role in Indian economy. According to a report this sector has a share of its contribution of 4% of the country's GDP and is 14% when evaluated against the country's total industrial production. **This sector is one of the largest sources of employment, employing approximately 45 million.** The Indian handicraft industry is supported by a network of 744 clusters that employ approximately 212,000 artisans and offer more than 35,000 products.

Currently, *Sanjhi* painting is practiced in only a few Indian temples in Mathura. Vrindavan's Radharamana temple is one of them. Looking at the limited scope that *Sanjhi* has survived; it's time to bring in the design element to increase the marketability of *Sanjhi* craft. However, the important part is that the essence of this craft should remain intact while finding ways to take it to a global market. It is therefore recommended that the design fraternity should become sensitive towards the *Sanjhi* craft along with the other crafts in order to take necessary action towards the restoration of the dying traditional craft of Braj.

Graph 1: India's handmade exports
(Source: Export Promotion Council for Handicraft (EPCH) *until February 2023)

Literature Review

Designing textiles has a long history and is perhaps India's oldest craft. The Indian artisan industry is a highly labor-intensive, artisanal, and decentralized. The industry is spread throughout the country, mainly in rural, remote isolated tribal areas and also in urban settings.

To explore various aspects of this and related textile and handicraft sector a brief review of literature is presented in the following sections.

Jaitly Jaya (1990) in "Living Traditions of India: The *Sanjhi* Craft", discuss the techniques involved in *Sanjhi*, detailing the tools and methods used by artisans to create these exquisite paper-cut designs. Cultural practices, artistic techniques, and artisanal skills that have been passed down through generations and continue to be actively practiced in contemporary India. And also highlight the artisans and communities that have preserved and practiced the *Sanjhi* craft, shedding light on their lifestyles, traditions, and challenges.

UshaBalakrishnan (2018) in "*Sanjhi*: An Art of the Deccan" explores *Sanjhi* art, particularly in the context of the Deccan region in India. This book delves into the rich cultural heritage of *Sanjhi* art, providing insights into its history, techniques, and significance in Indian traditional artistry.

AnupaPande (2016) in "*Sanjhi*: Art of the Folk Paper Stencil", provides insights into the history, techniques, and aesthetics of *Sanjhi* art, which is a traditional Indian paper-cutting craft often

associated with religious and cultural celebrations, particularly in North India. Also explain the intricate and delicate paper stencils created by artisans and explores the cultural significance of this art form.

AsimakrishnaDasa (1996) in “Evening Blossoms (The Temple Tradition of *Sanjhi* in Vrndavana)” explores the history and significance of the *Sanjhi* tradition in Vrindavan, highlighting its connection to the worship of Lord Krishna and the Radha-Krishna divine love story. It also delves into the techniques used in making the paper stencils and the process of creating the intricate designs and also discusses the social and economic aspects of *Sanjhi*.

Usha Garg (2017) in her book "*Sanjhi*: A Traditional Art of Paper-Cutting from Mathura" provides an in-depth understanding of the historical significance and cultural importance of *Sanjhi*. It delves into the techniques, tools, and materials used in this art form, showcasing stunning photographs of *Sanjhi* artworks to illustrate the intricate detailing. It describes the different motifs, symbols, and themes commonly found in *Sanjhi* designs, as well as the religious and folkloric inspirations behind them.

Bal Krishan Sharma (2011) in "*Sanjhi* Art: A Glimpse into the Intricate Paper Cutting Tradition of India" explores the significance of *Sanjhi* art in the context of Rangoli making in Mathura. The author highlights how *Sanjhi* art is seen as an expression of devotion and reverence towards deities during festive occasions. The study also discusses the various motifs and symbols used in *Sanjhi* designs, which often depict scenes from mythological narratives and depict floral patterns.

Gouri Basu (2020) in her book "*Sanjhi*: Folk Art of Mathura and Vrindavan" explain a detailed account of the techniques and materials used in creating *Sanjhi* artwork. Through vivid descriptions and stunning visuals and it highlights the importance of this art form in the religious and festive traditions of Mathura and Vrindavan, particularly during the auspicious occasion of Radha-Krishna's Raas Leela. It also includes interviews with local artisans and practitioners of *Sanjhi*, shedding light on their experiences and insights into this age-old art form.

Ahmed (1980) in his book entitled “Problems and Management of Small Scale and Cottage Industries” andaccording to G.S. Bharati (2005), the quality of the artisans' work and the particular interest shown by the federal and state governments in boosting the export of handcrafted products are the main reasons why the marketing of handicrafts has been successful.

In his book "Marketing of Handicrafts," Rao (1978), elaborated on the marketing of handicrafts and emphasized the work of craftsmen.

In their study article, "Problems and challenges faced by Handicraft Artisans," Rajiv Patel and Amisha Shah (2017) noted that the majority of artisans are employed in the conventional unorganized sector, where they are at risk of exploitation and get little pay. Due to their lack of organization, knowledge, finance, exposure, market intelligence, and a weak institutional framework, artisans experience a great deal of hardship.

According to stakeholder theory, the involvement of the government, artisans, customers, and social groups, and the availability of financial resources (financiers) cannot be separated from the significance of the growth and development of artisan enterprise (Freeman, 1984).

Garg & Walia (2019)discussed the challenges of the handicraft industry by delineating the difficulties faced by the artisans involved in the handicraft sector through urban haats. It was discovered that the normal supply chain, hands-on labor, a lack of ability, licensing requirements, and other laws all have a big impact on people's choices to participate in haats. Samal (1994)has also explained in his article that the Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (Trifed) has started the process of branding some of the tribal handicrafts that it buys from artisans and selling them at its 36 “Tribes India” outlets in the country and two overseas which can provide marketing support to the artisans.

There is a lack of comprehensive studies that delve into the real-world challenges faced during the implementation of a system-based approach for the sustainable revival of *Sanjhi* Art. Detailed analyses of strategies that work, as well as those that fail, are necessary for informing future initiatives.

Existing research often lacks robust methodologies for assessing the long-term impact of revival efforts. Studies focusing on the sustained economic, social, and cultural benefits to the artisans and the communities involved in *Sanjhi* Art and textile production are essential to gauge the effectiveness of these initiatives over time.

Many studies may focus on the cultural and artistic aspects of *Sanjhi* Art but may not provide a thorough economic analysis. Exploring the economic viability, market potential, and income generation for artisans and businesses could be an area needing attention.

There is a lack of structured approach comprehensive frameworks that integrate cultural preservation, economic viability, and environmental sustainability specifically tailored for *Sanjhi* Art and its textile correlates.

Hypothesis

Entrepreneurial strategies complement skill development initiatives by empowering artisans to establish sustainable enterprises and unlock access to broader markets. Beyond artistic proficiency, artisans require business acumen to thrive in a competitive landscape. Entrepreneurial programs encompass training in marketing, branding, financial literacy, and product diversification, enabling artisans to carve a unique identity for dying *Sanjhi* art and its textiles and effectively promote their creations to a broader audience. Skilling strategies focus on enhancing artisans' proficiency in traditional *Sanjhi* techniques, including the delicate art of paper-cutting, intricate design creation, and meticulous assembly of the final textile products. By equipping artisans with these specialized skills, the authenticity, quality, and artistic value of *Sanjhi* art and textiles can be preserved and enhanced.

Reviving *Sanjhi* art strategically involves a well-thought-out approach that takes into consideration various factors, including cultural significance, economic sustainability, and outreach. One potent element for the revival of *Sanjhi* and related textile art forms is the transfer of techniques and skills from master artisans to younger generations. Through research, practical initiatives, and collaborations, it is possible to identify the integrated potent elements and understand their interrelationships, ultimately leading to the successful revival, sustainability, and preservation of dying *Sanjhi* art and related textile correlates.

The strategic approach to reviving *Sanjhi* art could start with a strong emphasis on its cultural preservation. This would involve documenting the history and techniques to create a comprehensive methodology using knowledge management technique for sustainable revival of *Sanjhi* art and its textile correlates. Cultural preservation can help to maintain the authenticity and traditional essence of the art form. It requires a holistic approach that combines cultural preservation, artisan support, market access, and promotional efforts. By carefully developing scenario and action plan to strategizes its sustainability. Such Strategies it is accepted would be able to regain *Sanjhi* art and its prominence in order to thrive in the contemporary world while preserving its rich cultural heritage.

Objectives

In light of the above facts and expositions, the present research work has been aimed on the following objectives as it would focus on *Sanjhi* Art and its textile correlates for their revival and sustainable growth.

- To identify integrated potent elements for developing skilling and entrepreneurial strategies for empowering sustainable revival of *Sanjhi* Art and its textile correlates.
- To develop structured framework for the identified potent elements encompassing skill development requirements, entrepreneurial worth, needs and challenges to revive, sustain and preserve *Sanjhi* Art and related textile correlates.
- To assess, forecast and develop short and long-term strategy for sustainability of *Sanjhi* and related textile endeavors.
- To develop action plan for sustainability of *Sanjhi* and textile related initiatives.
- To analyze data for objective assessment of developed action plan under in- situ settings.
- To digitize marketable *Sanjhi* designs in context with the developed action plan for their sustainability to bring skilled endeavors of *Sanjhi* artisans in the mainstream field of view.
- To evaluate entrepreneurial worth of the developed product using selected design.

Research Methodology

Variables:

- In-situ visit to artisans of *Sanjhi* at Vrindavan, Mathura U.P. (India)
- Data/Knowledge acquisition by using various Digital as well as Traditional Library Facilities
- Visit to Art Gallery/Art Museums
- Data/Knowledge acquisition through Internet Repository

Research Design:

The small group census methodology, Qualitative/Quantitative data analysis would be the possible design tool for achieving the objective of a system Based Approach to strategize sustainable Revival of *Sanjhi* Art and its Textile Correlates.

Data Collection:

Primary Source: Data acquisition from expect artisans in *Sanjhi*, experts from academia, marketing, business houses etc. through small group census methodology by way of organizing several small workshop sessions in mix mode (online & offline)

Secondary Sources: Acquisition of data from secondary sources like Books, magazine, Journals, Catalogues, Research Papers, government documents.

Limitations

The limitations of the techniques used in the proposed work for various processes and methodologies like identification of elements, forecasting, scenario building, and dominances order evaluation of alternate motifs would also be the limitation of the proposed work.

Conclusion

The revival of *Sanjhi* art and its textile correlates represents a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation, with the potential to not only survive but also flourish in the modern world. These art forms continue to inspire, connect with diverse audiences, and contribute to the rich tapestry of India's cultural heritage while transcending boundaries to captivate the global artistic community. Through a strategic approach that encompasses cultural preservation, economic empowerment, community engagement, and innovation, there is a strong potential for these traditional art forms to thrive once more. The literature on *Sanjhi* art highlights its rich history, religious and cultural significance, intricate techniques, and the evolving role it plays in contemporary art and culture.

While challenges such as economic sustainability, market competition, and changing cultural practices exist, the literature demonstrates that there is a growing interest in preserving and revitalizing *Sanjhi* art and textiles. Collaborative initiatives by artisans, NGOs, cultural institutions, and government agencies are actively working towards ensuring the sustainability and cultural preservation of these traditional art forms.

Promotion and marketing strategies, along with economic sustainability measures, are essential to bridge the gap between artisans and consumers. These efforts not only create market access but also empower artisans economically, making their livelihoods more secure.

Digital archiving and promotion leverage modern technology to document and showcase *Sanjhi* art and textile-related content, ensuring that these traditions remain accessible to a global audience and

future generations.

The identification of integrated potent elements and the understanding of their interrelationships offer a roadmap for the successful revival, and preservation of *Sanjhi* art and related textile correlates. This comprehensive approach not only ensures the survival of these rich cultural traditions but also enables them to thrive and evolve in a contemporary world while preserving their essence and heritage.

Relevance in Modern Era

India embodies the essence of cultural heritage and artistic brilliance. Characterized by intricate designs and meticulous craftsmanship, *Sanjhi* art has been a source of fascination and admiration for generations, representing the rich artistic legacy of the region. However, the dawn of modernization and shifting consumer preferences have cast a shadow over the traditional art forms, including *Sanjhi* art and its correlated textile production, putting their survival at risk.

In response to these challenges, the pursuit of skilling and entrepreneurial strategies emerges as a transformative endeavor to empower artisans and catalyze the revival of *Sanjhi* art and its textile production for sustainable growth. Skilling strategies seek to augment artisans' expertise in traditional *Sanjhi* techniques, encompassing the intricate art of paper-cutting, innovative design creation, and skillful assembly. By honing these specialized skills, artisans can breathe new life into *Sanjhi* art, preserving its authenticity and elevating its artistic merit and aim at preserving the skill and techniques while involving the modern technological concepts in the value chain without losing the ethos of heritage and quality of life of the artisans.

It is crucial to understand the nature of interacting elements for revival of traditional crafts like *Sanjhi* which are facing the challenge of getting extinct. Traditional crafts hold cultural, historical, and artistic value, but they often face challenges such as modernization, changing consumer preferences, and competition from mass-produced goods.

Identifying the key or potent elements or factors that are integrated into the *Sanjhi* art and textile development is thus a necessary requirement that would make a cogent impact on sustenance of this dying art and their textile correlates. This could include historical, cultural, economic, and technological factors. A visual or conceptual impact structure that illustrates the interrelationships between the identified elements is a better option in this regard. This could be a diagram, model, or

framework that helps stakeholders and researchers understand how various factors interact and influence each other for reviving, sustaining, and preserving *Sanjhi* art.

A System Based Approach to Strategize Sustainable Revival of *Sanjhi* Art and its Textile Correlates

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APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

INTERNET WEBSITES

LIST OF IMAGES OF *SANJHI* ART

RESEARCH DESIGN

INTRODUCTION-A brief introduction about Mathura Art and Culture.

FIRST CHAPTER-

The background, historical perspectives and need for a system-based approach to strategize revival of *Sanjhi* art and its textile correlates shall be discussed

SECOND CHAPTER-

A brief review of literature to reinforce the requirement of the proposed study to establish the need of the proposed work and the applicability of the proposed tool /model shall be discussed

THIRD CHAPTER-

The chapter would focus on data acquisition to identify potent elements effecting sustainability of *Sanjhi* art and its textiles correlates using Second Generation System Design Paradigm

The chapter would dwell upon methodology and process to obtain coevolving interrelated hierarchical impact structure of identified potent elements for sustainability of *Sanjhi* art and its textile correlates

FOURTH CHAPTER-

The chapter would discuss acquisition, analysis and interpretation of data using a developed detailed DELPHI questionnaire involving affecting dimensions and elements for Subjective/objective long and short term forecast of *Sanjhi* art and its textile correlates for its future development strategy.

It would also work on developing action plan for a strategic developed scenario and would be evaluated for its objective assessment under in situ settings.

FIFTH CHAPTER-

This chapter would focus on analysis of subjective data to priorities various alternative motifs for their dominance under different dimensions involving sustainability, marketability and quality.

It would evaluate entrepreneurial worthiness of the developed product using selected design.

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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LIST OF IMAGES OF *SANJHI* ART

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IMAGES

Image-1 Creating *Sanjhi* Art in temple of Mathura

Image-2 *Sanjhi* Art in Mathura

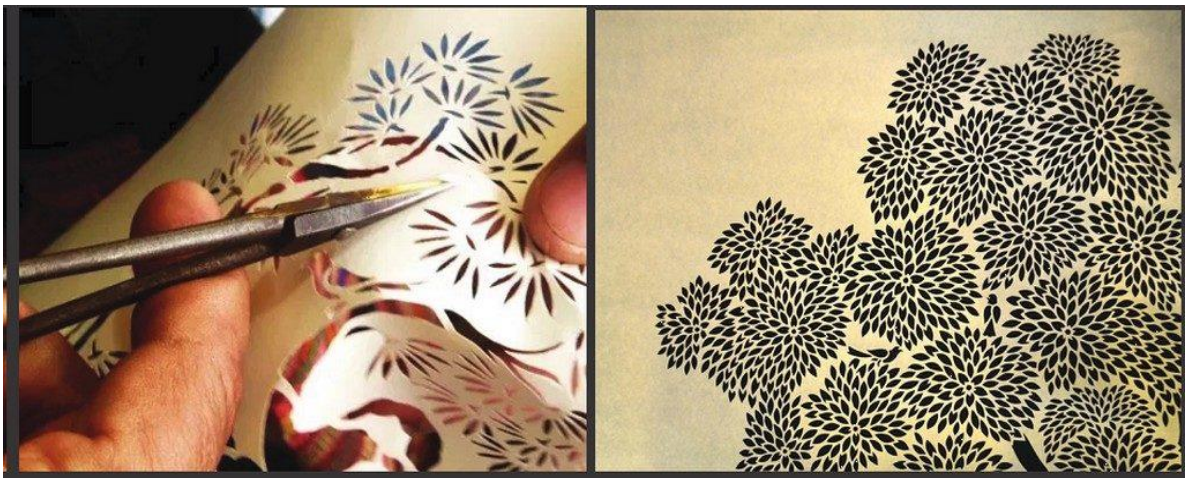

Image-3

(Source: https://www.artsofindia.in/arts-of-india-blog/post/indian-arts-and-crafts/*Sanjhi*-painting.html**)**

Image-4

(Source:https://www.storyltd.com/auction/item.aspx?eid=3845&lotno=24**)**

The Process of Creating Sanjhi Art

Image-5
(Source: https://chantal-jumel-kolam-kalam.com/en/)

Image- 6
(Source: https://chantal-jumel-kolam-kalam.com/en/)

Image-7
(Source: https://chantal-jumel-kolam-kalam.com/en/)

Image-8
(Source: https://chantal-jumel-kolam-kalam.com/en/)